No. 24. PRICE SIXPENCE. MAY 11.

The Last Chronicle of Barset

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

With Illustrations by G. H. Thomas

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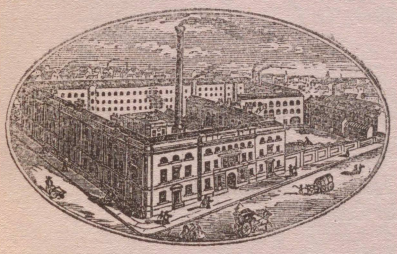

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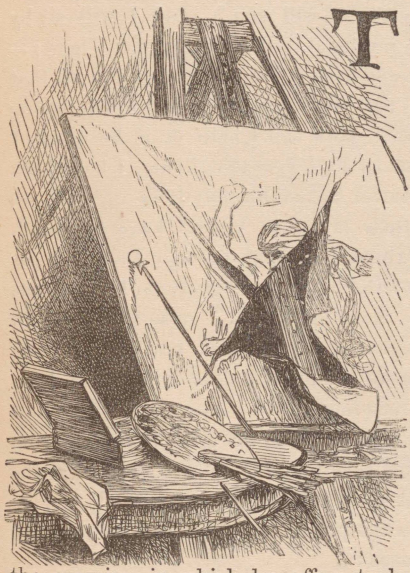
"IT'S DOGGED AS DOES IT."

CHAPTER LX.

THE END OF JAEL AND SISERA.



THERE was to be one more sitting for the picture, as the reader will remember, and the day for that sitting had arrived. Conway Dalrymple had in the meantime called at Mrs. Van Siever's house, hoping that he might be able to see Clara, and make his offer to her there. But he had failed in his attempt to reach her. He had found it impossible to say all that he had to say in the painting-room, during the very short intervals which Mrs. Broughton left to him. A man should be allowed to be alone more than fifteen minutes with a young lady on the occasion in which he offers to her his hand and his heart; but hitherto he had never had more than fifteen minutes at his command; and then there had been the turban! He had also in the meantime called on Mrs. Broughton, with the intention of explaining to her that if she really intended to favour his views in respect to Miss Van Siever, she ought to give him a little more liberty for expressing himself. On this occasion he had seen his friend, but had not been able to go as minutely as he had wished into the matter that was so important to himself. Mrs. Broughton had found it necessary during this meeting to talk almost exclusively about herself and her own affairs. "Conway," she had said, directly she saw him, "I am so glad you have come. I think I should have gone mad if I had not seen some one who cares for me." This was early in the morning, not much after eleven, and Mrs. Broughton, hearing first his knock at the door, and then his voice, had met him in the hall and taken him into the dining-room.

"Is anything the matter?" he asked.

"Oh, Conway!"

"What is it? Has anything gone wrong with Dobbs?"

"Everything has gone wrong with him. He is ruined."

"Heaven and earth! What do you mean?"

"Simply what I say. But you must not speak a word of it. I do not know it from himself."

"How do you know it?"

"Wait a moment. Sit down there, will you?—and I will sit by you. No, Conway; do not take my hand. It is not right. There;—so. Yesterday Mrs. Van Siever was here. I need not tell you all that she said to me, even if I could. She was very harsh and cruel, saying all manner of things about Dobbs. How can I help it, if he drinks? I have not encouraged him. And as for expensive living, I have been as ignorant as a child. I have never asked for anything. When we were married somebody told me how much we should have to spend. It was either two thousand, or three thousand, or four thousand, or something like that. You know, Conway, how ignorant I am about money;—that I am like a child. Is it not true?" She waited for an answer and Dalrymple was obliged to acknowledge that it was true. And yet he had known the times in which his dear friend had been very sharp in her memory with reference to a few pounds. "And now she says that Dobbs owes her money which he cannot pay her, and that everything must be sold. She says that Musselboro must have the business, and that Dobbs must shift for himself elsewhere."

"Do you believe that she has the power to decide that things shall go this way or that,—as she pleases?"

"How am I to know? She says so, and she says it is because he drinks. He does drink. That at least is true; but how can I help it? Oh, Conway, what am I to do? Dobbs did not come home at all last night, but sent for his things,—saying that he must stay in the City. What am I to do if they come and take the house, and sell the furniture, and turn me out into the street?" Then the poor creature began to cry in earnest, and Dalrymple had to console her as best he might. "How I wish I had known you first," she said. To this Dalrymple was able to make no direct answer. He was wise enough to know that a direct answer might possibly lead him into terrible trouble. He was by no means anxious to find himself "protecting" Mrs. Dobbs Broughton from the ruin which her husband had brought upon her.

Before he left her she had told him a long story, partly of matters of which he had known something before, and partly made up of that which she had heard from the old woman. It was settled, Mrs.

Broughton said, that Mr. Musselboro was to marry Clara Van Siever. But it appeared, as far as Dalrymple could learn, that this was a settlement made simply between Mrs. Van Siever and Musselboro. Clara, as he thought, was not a girl likely to fall into such a settlement without having an opinion of her own. Musselboro was to have the business, and Dobbs Broughton was to be "sold up," and then look for employment in the City. From her husband the wife had not heard a word on this matter, and the above story was simply what had been told to Mrs. Broughton by Mrs. Van Siever. "For myself it seems that there can be but one fate," said Mrs. Broughton. Dalrymple, in his tenderest voice, asked what that one fate must be. "Never mind," said Mrs. Broughton. "There are some things which one cannot tell even to such a friend as you." He was sitting near her and had all but got his arm behind her waist. He was, however, able to be prudent. "Maria," he said, getting up on his feet, "if it should really come about that you should want anything, you will send to me. You will promise me that, at any rate?" She rubbed a tear from her eye and said that she did not know. "There are moments in which a man must speak plainly," said Conway Dalrymple;—"in which it would be unmanly not to do so, however prosaic it may seem. I need hardly tell you that my purse shall be yours if you want it." But just at that moment she did not want his purse, nor must it be supposed that she wanted to run away with him and to leave her husband to fight the battle alone with Mrs. Van Siever. The truth was that she did not know what she wanted, over and beyond an assurance from Conway Dalrymple that she was the most ill-used, the most interesting, and the most beautiful woman ever heard of, either in history or romance. Had he proposed to her to pack up a bundle and go off with him in a cab to the London, Chatham, and Dover railway station, en route for Boulogne, I do not for a moment think that she would have packed up her bundle. She would have received intense gratification from the offer,—so much so that she would have been almost consoled for her husband's ruin; but she would have scolded her lover, and would have explained to him the great iniquity of which he was guilty.

It was clear to him that at this present time he could not make any special terms with her as to Clara Van Siever. At such a moment as this he could hardly ask her to keep out of the way, in order that he might have his opportunity. But when he suggested that probably it might be better, in the present emergency, to give up the idea of any further sitting in her room, and proposed to send for his canvas, colour-box, and easel, she told him that, as far as she was concerned, he was

welcome to have that one other sitting for which they had all bargained. "You had better come to-morrow, as we had agreed," she said; "and unless I shall have been turned out into the street by the creditors, you may have the room as you did before. And you must remember, Conway, that though Mrs. Van says that Musselboro is to have Clara, it doesn't follow that Clara should give way." When we consider everything, we must acknowledge that this was, at any rate, good-natured. Then there was a tender parting, with many tears, and Conway Dalrymple escaped from the house.

He did not for a moment doubt the truth of the story which Mrs. Broughton had told, as far, at least, as it referred to the ruin of Dobbs Broughton. He had heard something of this before, and for some weeks had expected that a crash was coming. Broughton's rise had been very sudden, and Dalrymple had never regarded his friend as firmly placed in the commercial world. Dobbs was one of those men who seem born to surprise the world by a spurt of prosperity, and might, perhaps, have had a second spurt, or even a third, could he have kept himself from drinking in the morning. But Dalrymple, though he was hardly astonished by the story, as it regarded Broughton, was put out by that part of it which had reference to Musselboro. He had known that Musselboro had been introduced to Broughton by Mrs. Van Siever, but, nevertheless, he had regarded the man as being no more than Broughton's clerk. And now he was told that Musselboro was to marry Clara Van Siever, and have all Mrs. Van Siever's money. He resolved, at last, that he would run his risk about the money, and take Clara either with or without it, if she would have him. And as for that difficulty in asking her, if Mrs. Broughton would give him no opportunity of putting the question behind her back, he would put it before her face. He had not much leisure for consideration on these points, as the next day was the day for the last sitting.

On the following morning he found Miss Van Siever already seated in Mrs. Broughton's room when he reached it. And at the moment Mrs. Broughton was not there. As he took Clara's hand, he could not prevent himself from asking her whether she had heard anything? "Heard what?" said Clara. "Then you have not," said he. "Never mind now, as Mrs. Broughton is here." Then Mrs. Broughton had entered the room. She seemed to be quite cheerful, but Dalrymple perfectly understood, from a special glance which she gave to him, that he was to perceive that her cheerfulness was assumed for Clara's benefit. Mrs. Broughton was showing how great a heroine she could be on behalf of her friends. "Now, my dear," she said, "do remember

that this is the last day. It may be all very well, Conway, and, of course, you know best; but as far as I can see, you have not made half as much progress as you ought to have done." "We shall do excellently well," said Dalrymple. "So much the better," said Mrs. Broughton; "and now, Clara, I'll place you." And so Clara was placed on her knees, with the turban on her head.

Dalrymple began his work assiduously, knowing that Mrs. Broughton would not leave the room for some minutes. It was certain that she would remain for a quarter of an hour, and it might be as well that he should really use that time on his picture. The peculiar position in which he was placed probably made his work difficult to him. There was something perplexing in the necessity which bound him to look upon the young lady before him both as Jael and as the future Mrs. Conway Dalrymple, knowing as he did that she was at present simply Clara Van Siever. A double personification was not difficult to him. He had encountered it with every model that had sat to him, and with every young lady he had attempted to win,—if he had ever made such an attempt with one before. But the triple character, joined to the necessity of the double work, was distressing to him. "The hand a little further back, if you don't mind," he said, "and the wrist more turned towards me. That is just it. Lean a little more over him. There—that will do exactly." If Mrs. Broughton did not go very quickly, he must begin to address his model on a totally different subject, even while she was in the act of slaying Sisera.

"Have you made up your mind who is to be Sisera?" asked Mrs. Broughton.

"I think I shall put in my own face," said Dalrymple; "if Miss Van Siever does not object."

"Not in the least," said Clara, speaking without moving her face—almost without moving her lips.

"That will be excellent," said Mrs. Broughton. She was still quite cheerful, and really laughed as she spoke. "Shall you like the idea, Clara, of striking the nail right through his head?"

"Oh, yes; as well his head as another's. I shall seem to be having my revenge for all the trouble he has given me."

There was a slight pause, and then Dalrymple spoke. "You have had that already, in striking me right through the heart."

"What a very pretty speech! Was it not, my dear?" said Mrs. Broughton. And then Mrs. Broughton laughed. There was something slightly hysterical in her laugh which grated on Dalrymple's

ears,—something which seemed to tell him that at the present moment his dear friend was not going to assist him honestly in his effort.

"Only that I should put him out, I would get up and make a curtsey," said Clara. No young lady could ever talk of making a curtsey for such a speech if she supposed it to have been made in earnestness. And Clara, no doubt, understood that a man might make a hundred such speeches in the presence of a third person without any danger that they would be taken as meaning anything. All this Dalrymple knew, and began to think that he had better put down his palette and brush, and do the work which he had before him in the most prosaic language that he could use. He could, at any rate, succeed in making Clara acknowledge his intention in this way. He waited still for a minute or two, and it seemed to him that Mrs. Broughton had no intention of piling her fagots on the present occasion. It might be that the remembrance of her husband's ruin prevented her from sacrificing herself in the other direction also.

"I am not very good at pretty speeches, but I am good at telling the truth," said Dalrymple.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mrs. Broughton, still with a touch of hysterical action in her throat. "Upon my word, Conway, you know how to praise yourself."

"He dispraises himself most unnecessarily in denying the prettiness of his language," said Clara. As she spoke she hardly moved her lips, and Dalrymple went on painting from the model. It was clear that Miss Van Siever understood that the painting, and not the pretty speeches, was the important business on hand.

Mrs. Broughton had now tucked her feet up on the sofa, and was gazing at the artist as he stood at his work. Dalrymple, remembering how he had offered her his purse,—an offer which, in the existing crisis of her affairs, might mean a great deal,—felt that she was ill-natured. Had she intended to do him a good turn, she would have gone now; but there she lay, with her feet tucked up, clearly purposing to be present through the whole of that morning's sitting. His anger against her added something to his spirit, and made him determine that he would carry out his purpose. Suddenly, therefore, he prepared himself for action.

He was in the habit of working with a Turkish cap on his head, and with a short apron tied round him. There was something picturesque about the cap, which might not have been incongruous with love-making. It is easy to suppose that Juan wore a Turkish cap when he sat with Haidee in Lambro's island. But we may be quite

sure that he did not wear an apron. Now Dalrymple had thought of all this, and had made up his mind to work to-day without his apron; but when arranging his easel and his brushes, he had put it on from force of habit, and was now disgusted with himself as he remembered it. He put down his brush, divested his thumb of his palette, then took off his cap, and after that untied the apron.

"Conway, what are going to do?" said Mrs. Broughton.

"I am going to ask Clara Van Siever to be my wife," said Dalrymple. At that moment the door was opened, and Mrs. Van Siever entered the room.

Clara had not risen from her kneeling posture when Dalrymple began to put off his trappings. She had not seen what he was doing as plainly as Mrs. Broughton had done, having her attention naturally drawn towards her Sisera; and, besides this, she understood that she was to remain as she was placed till orders to move were given to her. Dalrymple would occasionally step aside from his easel to look at her in some altered light, and on such occasions she would simply hold her hammer somewhat more tightly than before. When, therefore, Mrs. Van Siever entered the room Clara was still slaying Sisera, in spite of the artist's speech. The speech, indeed, and her mother both seemed to come to her at the same time. The old woman stood for a moment holding the open door in her hand. "You fool!" she said, "what are you doing there, dressed up in that way like a guy?" Then Clara got up from her feet and stood before her mother in Jael's dress and Jael's turban. Dalrymple thought that the dress and turban did not become her badly. Mrs. Van Siever apparently thought otherwise. "Will you have the goodness to tell me, miss, why you are dressed up after that Mad Bess of Bedlam fashion?"

The reader will no doubt bear in mind that Clara had other words of which to think besides those which were addressed to her by her mother. Dalrymple had asked her to be his wife in the plainest possible language, and she thought that the very plainness of the language became him well. The very taking off of his apron, almost as he said the words, though to himself the action had been so distressing as almost to overcome his purpose, had in it something to her of direct simple determination which pleased her. When he had spoken of having had a nail driven by her right through his heart, she had not been in the least gratified; but the taking off of the apron, and the putting down of the palette, and the downright way in which he had called her Clara Van Siever,—attempting to be neither sentimental with Clara, nor polite with Miss Van Siever,—did please her. She had often said to

herself that she would never give a plain answer to a man who did not ask her a plain question;—to a man who, in asking this question, did not say plainly to her, "Clara Van Siever, will you become Mrs. Jones?"—or Mrs. Smith, or Mrs. Tomkins, as the case might be. Now Conway Dalrymple had asked her to become Mrs. Dalrymple very much after this fashion. In spite of the apparition of her mother, all this had passed through her mind. Not the less, however, was she obliged to answer her mother, before she could give any reply to the other questioner. In the meantime Mrs. Dobbs Broughton had untucked her feet.

"Mamma," said Clara, "who ever expected to see you here?"

"I daresay nobody did," said Mrs. Van Siever; "but here I am, nevertheless."

"Madam," said Mrs. Dobbs Broughton, "you might at any rate have gone through the ceremony of having yourself announced by the servant."

"Madam," said the old woman, attempting to mimic the tone of the other, "I thought that on such a very particular occasion as this I might be allowed to announce myself. You tomfool, you, why don't you take that turban off?" Then Clara, with slow and graceful motion, unwound the turban. If Dalrymple really meant what he had said, and would stick to it, she need not mind being called a tomfool by her mother.

"Conway, I am afraid that our last sitting is disturbed," said Mrs. Broughton, with her little laugh.

"Conway's last sitting certainly is disturbed," said Mrs. Van Siever, and then she mimicked the laugh. "And you'll all be disturbed,—I can tell you that. What an ass you must be to go on with this kind of thing, after what I said to you yesterday! Do you know that he got beastly drunk in the City last night, and that he is drunk now, while you are going on with your tomfooleries?" Upon hearing this, Mrs. Dobbs Broughton fainted into Dalrymple's arms.

Hitherto the artist had not said a word, and had hardly known what part it would best become him now to play. If he intended to marry Clara,—and he certainly did intend to marry her if she would have him,—it might be as well not to quarrel with Mrs. Van Siever. At any rate there was nothing in Mrs. Van Siever's intrusion, disagreeable as it was, which need make him take up his sword to do battle with her. But now, as he held Mrs. Broughton in his arms, and as the horrid words which the old woman had spoken rung in his ears, he could not refrain himself from uttering reproach. "You ought not to

have told her in this way, before other people, even if it be true," said Conway.

"Leave me to be my own judge of what I ought to do, if you please, sir. If she had any feeling at all, what I told her yesterday would have kept her from all this. But some people have no feeling, and will go on being tomfools though the house is on fire." As these words were spoken, Mrs. Broughton fainted more persistently than ever,—so that Dalrymple was convinced that whether she felt or not, at any rate she heard. He had now dragged her across the room, and laid her upon the sofa, and Clara had come to her assistance. "I daresay you think me very hard because I speak plainly, but there are things much harder than plain speaking. How much do you expect to be paid, sir, for this picture of my girl?"

"I do not expect to be paid for it at all," said Dalrymple,

"And who is it to belong to?"

"It belongs to me at present."

"Then, sir, it mustn't belong to you any longer. It won't do for you to have a picture of my girl to hang up in your painting-room for all your friends to come and make their jokes about, nor yet to make a show of it in any of your exhibitions. My daughter has been a fool, and I can't help it. If you'll tell me what's the cost, I'll pay you; then I'll have the picture home, and I'll treat it as it deserves."

Dalrymple thought for a moment about his picture and about Mrs. Van Siever. What had he better do? He wanted to behave well, and he felt that the old woman had something of justice on her side. "Madam," he said, "I will not sell this picture; but it shall be destroyed, if you wish it."

"I certainly do wish it, but I won't trust to you. If it's not sent to my house at once you'll hear from me through my lawyers."

Then Dalrymple deliberately opened his penknife and slit the canvas across, through the middle of the picture each way. Clara, as she saw him do it, felt that in truth she loved him. "There, Mrs. Van Siever," he said; "now you can take the bits home with you in your basket if you wish it." At this moment, as the rent canvas fell and fluttered upon the stretcher, there came a loud voice of lamentation from the sofa, a groan of despair and a shriek of wrath. "Very fine indeed," said Mrs. Van Siever. "When ladies faint they always ought to have their eyes about them. I see that Mrs. Broughton understands that."

"Take her away, Conway—for God's sake take her away," said Mrs. Broughton.

"I shall take myself away very shortly," said Mrs. Van Siever, "so you needn't trouble Mr. Conway about that. Not but what I thought the gentleman's name was Mr. something else."

"My name is Conway Dalrymple," said the artist.

"Then I suppose you must be her brother, or her cousin, or something of that sort?" said Mrs. Van Siever.

"Take her away," screamed Mrs. Dobbs Broughton.

"Wait a moment, madam. As you've chopped up your handiwork there, Mr. Conway Dalrymple, and as I suppose my daughter has been more to blame than anybody else——"

"She has not been to blame at all," said Dalrymple.

"That's my affair, and not yours," said Mrs. Van Siever, very sharply. "But as you've been at all this trouble, and have now chopped it up, I don't mind paying you for your time and paints; only I shall be glad to know how much it will come to?"

"There will be nothing to pay, Mrs. Van Siever."

"How long has he been at it, Clara?"

"Mamma, indeed you had better not say anything about paying him."

"I shall say whatever I please, miss. Will ten pounds do it, sir?"

"If you choose to buy the picture, the price will be seven hundred and fifty," said Dalrymple, with a smile, pointing to the fragments.

"Seven hundred and fifty pounds?" said the old woman.

"But I strongly advise you not to make the purchase," said Dalrymple.

"Seven hundred and fifty pounds! I certainly shall not give you seven hundred and fifty pounds, sir."

"I certainly think you could invest your money better, Mrs. Van Siever. But if the thing is to be sold at all, that is my price. I've thought that there was some justice in your demand that it should be destroyed,—and therefore I have destroyed it."

Mrs. Van Siever had been standing on the same spot ever since she had entered the room, and now she turned round to leave the room.

"If you have any demand to make, I beg that you will send in your account for work done to Mr. Musselboro. He is my man of business. Clara, are you ready to come home? The cab is waiting at the door,—at sixpence the quarter of an hour, if you will be pleased to remember."

"Mrs. Broughton," said Clara, thoughtful of her raiment, and remembering that it might not be well that she should return home, even in a cab, dressed as Jael; "if you will allow me, I will go into your room for a minute or two."

"Certainly, Clara," said Mrs. Broughton, preparing to accompany her.

"But before you go, Mrs. Broughton," said Mrs. Van Siever, "it may be as well that I should tell you that my daughter is going to become the wife of Mr. Musselboro. It may simplify matters that you should know this." And Mrs. Van Siever, as she spoke, looked hard at Conway Dalrymple.

"Mamma!" exclaimed Clara,

"My dear," said Mrs. Van Siever, "you had better change your dress and come away with me."

"Not till I have protested against what you have said, mamma."

"You had better leave your protesting alone, I can tell you."

"Mrs. Broughton," continued Clara, "I must beg you to understand that mamma has not the slightest right in the world to tell you what she just now said about me. Nothing on earth would induce me to become the wife of Mr. Broughton's partner."

There was something which made Clara unwilling even to name the man whom her mother had publicly proposed as her future husband.

"He isn't Mr. Broughton's partner," said Mrs. Van Siever. "Mr. Broughton has not got a partner. Mr. Musselboro is the head of the firm. And as to your marrying him, of course, I can't make you."

"No, mamma; you cannot."

"Mrs. Broughton understands that, no doubt;—and so, probably, does Mr. Dalrymple. I only tell them what are my ideas. If you choose to marry the sweep at the crossing, I can't help it. Only I don't see what good you would do the sweep, when he would have to sweep for himself and you too. At any rate, I suppose you mean to go home with me now?" Then Mrs. Broughton and Clara left the room, and Mrs. Van Siever was left with Conway Dalrymple. "Mr. Dalrymple," said Mrs. Van Siever, "do not deceive yourself. What I told you just now will certainly come to pass."

"It seems to me that that must depend on the young lady," said Dalrymple.

"I'll tell you what certainly will not depend on the young lady," said Mrs. Van Siever, "and that is whether the man who marries her will have more with her than the clothes she stands up in. You will understand that argument, I suppose?"

"I'm not quite sure that I do," said Dalrymple.

"Then you'd better try to understand it. Good-morning, sir. I'm sorry you've had to slit your picture." Then she curtseyed low, and walked out on to the landing-place. "Clara," she cried, "I'm waiting

for you—sixpence a quarter of an hour,—remember that." In a minute or two Clara came out to her, and then Mrs. Van Siever and Miss Van Siever took their departure.

"Oh, Conway, what am I to do? what am I to do?" said Mrs. Dobbs Broughton. Dalrymple stood perplexed for a few minutes, and could not tell her what she was to do. She was in such a position that it was very hard to tell her what to do. "Do you believe, Conway, that he is really ruined?'

"What am I to say? How am I to know?"

"I see that you believe it," said the wretched woman.

"I cannot but believe that there is something of truth in what this woman says. Why else should she come here with such a story?" Then there was a pause, during which Mrs. Broughton was burying her face on the arm of the sofa. "I'll tell you what I'll do," continued he. "I'll go into the City, and make inquiry. It can hardly be but what I shall learn the truth there."

Then there was another pause, at the end of which Mrs. Broughton got up from the sofa.

"Tell me," said she;—"what do you mean to do about that girl?"

"You heard me ask her to be my wife?"

"I did. I did!"

"Is it not what you intended?"

"Do not ask me. My mind is bewildered. My brain is on fire! Oh, Conway!"

"Shall I go into the City as I proposed?" said Dalrymple, who felt that he might at any rate improve the position of circumstances by leaving the house.

"Yes;—yes; go into the City! Go anywhere. Go. But stay! Oh, Conway!" There was a sudden change in her voice as she spoke. "Hark,—there he is, as sure as life." Then Conway listened, and heard a footstep on the stairs, as to which he had then but little doubt that it was the footstep of Dobbs Broughton. "O heavens! he is tipsy!" exclaimed Mrs. Broughton; "and what shall we do?" Then Dalrymple took her hand and pressed it, and left the room, so that he might meet the husband on the stairs. In the one moment that he had for reflection he thought it was better that there should be no concealment.

CHAPTER LXI.

"IT'S DOGGED AS DOES IT."

In accordance with the resolution to which the clerical commission had come on the first day of their sitting, Dr. Tempest wrote the following letter to Mr. Crawley:—

"Dear Sir,— Rectory, Silverbridge, April 9, 186—.

"I have been given to understand that you have been informed that the Bishop of Barchester has appointed a commission of clergymen of the diocese to make inquiry respecting certain accusations which, to the great regret of us all, have been made against you, in respect to a cheque for twenty pounds which was passed by you to a tradesman in this town. The clergymen appointed to form this commission are Mr. Oriel, the rector of Greshamsbury, Mr. Robarts, the vicar of Framley, Mr. Quiverful, the warden of Hiram's Hospital at Barchester, Mr. Thumble, a clergyman established in that city, and myself. We held our first meeting on last Monday, and I now write to you in compliance with a resolution to which we then came. Before taking any other steps we thought it best to ask you to attend us here on next Monday, at two o'clock, and I beg that you will accept this letter as an invitation to that effect.

"We are, of course, aware that you are about to stand your trial at the next assizes for the offence in question. I beg you to understand that I do not express any opinion as to your guilt. But I think it right to point out to you that in the event of a jury finding an adverse verdict, the bishop might be placed in great difficulty unless he were fortified with the opinion of a commission formed from your fellow clerical labourers in the diocese. Should such adverse verdict unfortunately be given, the bishop would hardly be justified in allowing a clergyman placed as you then would be placed, to return to his cure after the expiration of such punishment as the judge might award, without a further decision from an ecclesiastical court. This decision he could only obtain by proceeding against you under the Act in reference to clerical offences, which empowers him as bishop of the diocese to bring you before the Court of Arches,—unless you would think well to submit yourself entirely to his judgment. You will, I

think, understand what I mean. The judge at assizes might find it his duty to imprison a clergyman for a month,—regarding that clergyman simply as he would regard any other person found guilty by a jury and thus made subject to his judgment,—and might do this for an offence which the ecclesiastical judge would find himself obliged to visit with the severer sentence of prolonged suspension, or even with deprivation.

"We are, however, clearly of opinion that should the jury find themselves able to acquit you, no further action whatsoever should be taken. In such case we think that the bishop may regard your innocence to be fully established, and in such case we shall recommend his lordship to look upon the matter as altogether at an end. I can assure you that in such case I shall so regard it myself.

"You will perceive that, as a consequence of this resolution, to which we have already come, we are not minded to make any inquiries ourselves into the circumstances of your alleged guilt, till the verdict of the jury shall be given. If you are acquitted, our course will be clear. But should you be convicted, we must in that case advise the bishop to take the proceedings to which I have alluded, or to abstain from taking them. We wish to ask you whether, now that our opinion has been conveyed to you, you will be willing to submit to the bishop's decision, in the event of an adverse verdict being given by the jury; and we think that it will be better for us all that you should meet us here at the hour I have named on Monday next, the 15th instant. It is not our intention to make any report to the bishop until the trial shall be over.

"I have the honour to be,

"My dear sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"The Rev. Josiah Crawley, MORTIMER TEMPEST.

"Hogglestock."

In the same envelope Dr. Tempest sent a short private note, in which he said that he should be very happy to see Mr. Crawley at half-past one on the Monday named, that luncheon would be ready at that hour, and that, as Mr. Crawley's attendance was required on public grounds, he would take care that a carriage was provided for the day.

Mr. Crawley received this letter in his wife's presence, and read it in silence. Mrs. Crawley saw that he paid close attention to it, and was sure,—she felt that she was sure,—that it referred in some way to the terrible subject of the cheque for twenty pounds. Indeed, every-

thing that came into the house, almost every word spoken there, and every thought that came into the breasts of any of the family, had more or less reference to the coming trial. How could it be otherwise? There was ruin coming on them all,—ruin and complete disgrace coming on father, mother, and children! To have been accused itself was very bad; but now it seemed to be the opinion of every one that the verdict must be against the man. Mrs. Crawley herself, who was perfectly sure of her husband's innocence before God, believed that the jury would find him guilty,—and believed also that he had become possessed of the money in some manner that would have been dishonest, had he not been so different from other people as to be entitled to be considered innocent where another man would have been plainly guilty. She was full of the cheque for twenty pounds, and of its results. When, therefore, he had read the letter through a second time, and even then had spoken no word about it, of course she could not refrain from questioning him. "My love," she said, "what is the letter?"

"It is on business," he answered.

She was silent for a moment before she spoke again. "May I not know the business?"

"No," said he; "not at present."

"Is it from the bishop?"

"Have I not answered you? Have I not given you to understand that, for a while at least, I would prefer to keep the contents of this epistle to myself?" Then he looked at her very sternly, and afterwards turned his eyes upon the fireplace and gazed at the fire, as though he were striving to read there something of his future fate. She did not much regard the severity of his speech. That, too, like the taking of the cheque itself, was to be forgiven him, because he was different from other men. His black mood had come upon him, and everything was to be forgiven him now. He was as a child when cutting his teeth. Let the poor wayward sufferer be ever so petulant, the mother simply pities and loves him, and is never angry. "I beg your pardon, Josiah," she said, "but I thought it would comfort you to speak to me about it."

"It will not comfort me," he said. "Nothing comforts me. Nothing can comfort me. Jane, give me my hat and my stick." His daughter brought to him his hat and stick, and without another word he went out and left them.

As a matter of course he turned his steps towards Hoggle End. When he desired to be long absent from the house, he always went

among the brickmakers. His wife, as she stood at the window and watched the direction in which he went, knew that he might be away for hours. The only friends out of his own family with whom he ever spoke freely were some of these rough parishioners. But he was not thinking of the brickmakers when he started. He was simply desirous of again reading Dr. Tempest's letter, and of considering it, in some spot where no eye could see him. He walked away with long steps, regarding nothing,—neither the ruts in the dirty lane, nor the young primroses which were fast showing themselves on the banks, nor the gathering clouds which might have told him of the coming rain. He went on for a couple of miles, till he had nearly reached the outskirts of the colony of Hoggle End, and then he sat himself down upon a gate. He had not been there a minute before a few slow large drops began to fall, but he was altogether too much wrapped up in his thoughts to regard the rain. What answer should he make to this letter from the man at Silverbridge?

The position of his own mind in reference to his own guilt or his own innocence was very singular. It was simply the truth that he did not know how the cheque had come to him. He did know that he had blundered about it most egregiously, especially when he had averred that this cheque for twenty pounds had been identical with a cheque for another sum which had been given to him by Mr. Soames. He had blundered since, in saying that the dean had given it to him. There could be no doubt as to this, for the dean had denied that he had done so. And he had come to think it very possible that he had indeed picked the cheque up, and had afterwards used it, having deposited it by some strange accident,—not knowing then what he was doing, or what was the nature of the bit of paper in his hand,—with the notes which he had accepted from the dean with so much reluctance, with such an agony of spirit. In all these thoughts of his own about his own doings, and his own position, he almost admitted to himself his own insanity, his inability to manage his own affairs with that degree of rational sequence which is taken for granted as belonging to a man when he is made subject to criminal laws. As he puzzled his brain in his efforts to create a memory as to the cheque, and succeeded in bringing to his mind a recollection that he had once known something about the cheque,—that the cheque had at one time been the subject of a thought and of a resolution,—he admitted to himself that in accordance with all law and all reason he must be regarded as a thief. He had taken and used and spent that which he ought to have known was not his own;—which he would have known not to be his own but for

some terrible incapacity with which God had afflicted him. What then must be the result? His mind was clear enough about this. If the jury could see everything and know everything,—as he would wish that they should do; and if this bishop's commission, and the bishop himself, and the Court of Arches with its judge, could see and know everything; and if so seeing and so knowing they could act with clear honesty and perfect wisdom,—what would they do? They would declare of him that he was not a thief, only because he was so muddy-minded, so addle-pated as not to know the difference between meum and tuum! There could be no other end to it, let all the lawyers and all the clergymen in England put their wits to it. Though he knew himself to be muddy-minded and addle-pated, he could see that. And could any one say of such a man that he was fit to be the acting clergyman of a parish,—to have a freehold possession in a parish as curer of men's souls! The bishop was in the right of it, let him be ten times as mean a fellow as he was.

And yet as he sat there on the gate, while the rain came down heavily upon him, even when admitting the justice of the bishop, and the truth of the verdict which the jury would no doubt give, and the propriety of the action which that cold, reasonable, prosperous man at Silverbridge would take, he pitied himself with a tenderness of commiseration which knew no bounds. As for those belonging to him, his wife and children, his pity for them was of a different kind. He would have suffered any increase of suffering, could he by such agony have released them. Dearly as he loved them, he would have severed himself from them, had it been possible. Terrible thoughts as to their fate had come into his mind in the worst moments of his moodiness,—thoughts which he had had sufficient strength and manliness to put away from him with a strong hand, lest they should drive him to crime indeed; and these had come from the great pity which he had felt for them. But the commiseration which he had felt for himself had been different from this, and had mostly visited him at times when that other pity was for the moment in abeyance. What though he had taken the cheque, and spent the money though it was not his? He might be guilty before the law, but he was not guilty before God. There had never been a thought of theft in his mind, or a desire to steal in his heart. He knew that well enough. No jury could make him guilty of theft before God. And what though this mixture of guilt and innocence had come from madness,—from madness which these courts must recognize if they chose to find him innocent of the crime? In spite of his aberrations of intellect, if there

were any such, his ministrations in his parish were good. Had he not preached fervently and well,—preaching the true gospel? Had he not been very diligent among his people, striving with all his might to lessen the ignorance of the ignorant, and to gild with godliness the learning of the instructed? Had he not been patient, enduring, instant, and in all things amenable to the laws and regulations laid down by the Church for his guidance in his duties as a parish clergyman? Who could point out in what he had been astray, or where he had gone amiss? But for the work which he had done with so much zeal the Church which he served had paid him so miserable a pittance that, though life and soul had been kept together, the reason, or a fragment of the reason, had at moments escaped from his keeping in the scramble. Hence it was that this terrible calamity had fallen upon him! Who had been tried as he had been tried, and had gone through such fire with less loss of intellectual power than he had done? He was still a scholar, though no brother scholar ever came near him, and would make Greek iambics as he walked along the lanes. His memory was stored with poetry, though no book ever came to his hands, except those shorn and tattered volumes which lay upon his table. Old problems in trigonometry were the pleasing relaxations of his mind, and complications of figures were a delight to him. There was not one of those prosperous clergymen around him, and who scorned him, whom he could not have instructed in Hebrew. It was always a gratification to him to remember that his old friend the dean was weak in his Hebrew. He, with these acquirements, with these fitnesses, had been thrust down to the ground,—to the very granite,—and because in that harsh heartless thrusting his intellect had for moments wavered as to common things, cleaving still to all its grander, nobler possessions, he was now to be rent in pieces and scattered to the winds, as being altogether vile, worthless, and worse than worthless. It was thus that he thought of himself, pitying himself, as he sat upon the gate, while the rain fell ruthlessly on his shoulders.

He pitied himself with a commiseration that was sickly in spite of its truth. It was the fault of the man that he was imbued too strongly with self-consciousness. He could do a great thing or two. He could keep up his courage in positions which would wash all courage out of most men. He could tell the truth though truth should ruin him. He could sacrifice all that he had to duty. He could do justice though the heaven should fall. But he could not forget to pay a tribute to himself for the greatness of his own actions; nor, when accepting with an effort of meekness the small payment made by the world to him, in

return for his great works, could he forget the great payments made to others for small work. It was not sufficient for him to remember that he knew Hebrew, but he must remember also that the dean did not.

Nevertheless, as he sat there under the rain, he made up his mind with a clearness that certainly had in it nothing of that muddiness of mind of which he had often accused himself. Indeed, the intellect of this man was essentially clear. It was simply his memory that would play him tricks,—his memory as to things which at the moment were not important to him. The fact that the dean had given him money was very important, and he remembered it well. But the amount of the money, and its form, at a moment in which he had flattered himself that he might have strength to leave it unused, had not been important to him. Now, he resolved that he would go to Dr. Tempest, and that he would tell Dr. Tempest that there was no occasion for any further inquiry. He would submit to the bishop, let the bishop's decision be what it might. Things were different since the day on which he had refused Mr. Thumble admission to his pulpit. At that time people believed him to be innocent, and he so believed of himself. Now, people believed him to be guilty, and it could not be right that a man held in such slight esteem should exercise the functions of a parish priest, let his own opinion of himself be what it might. He would submit himself, and go anywhere,—to the galleys or the workhouse, if they wished it. As for his wife and children, they would, he said to himself, be better without him than with him. The world would never be so hard to a woman or to children as it had been to him.

He was sitting saturated with rain,—saturated also with thinking,—and quite unobservant of anything around him, when he was accosted by an old man from Hoggle End, with whom he was well acquainted. "Thee be wat, Master Crawley," said the old man.

"Wet!" said Crawley, recalled suddenly back to the realities of life. "Well,—yes. I am wet. That's because it's raining."

"Thee be teeming o' wat. Hadn't thee better go whome?"

"And are not you wet also?" said Mr. Crawley, looking at the old man, who had been at work in the brickfield, and who was soaked with mire, and from whom there seemed to come a steam of muddy mist.

"Is it me, yer reverence? I'm wat in course. The loikes of us is always wat,—that is barring the insides of us. It comes to us natural to have the rheumatics. How is one of us to help hisself against having on 'em? But there ain't no call for the loikes of you to have the rheumatics."

"My friend," said Crawley, who was now standing on the road,—and as he spoke he put out his arm and took the brickmaker by the hand, "there is a worse complaint than rheumatism,—there is, indeed."

"There's what they calls the collerer," said Giles Hoggett, looking up into Mr. Crawley's face. "That ain't a got a hold of yer?"

"Ay, and worse than the cholera. A man is killed all over when he is struck in his pride;—and yet he lives."

"Maybe that's bad enough too," said Giles, with his hand still held by the other.

"It is bad enough," said Mr. Crawley, striking his breast with his left hand. "It is bad enough."

"Tell 'ee what, Master Crawley;—and yer reverence mustn't think as I means to be preaching; there ain't nowt a man can't bear if he'll only be dogged. You go whome, Master Crawley, and think o' that, and maybe it'll do ye a good yet. It's dogged as does it. It ain't thinking about it." Then Giles Hoggett withdrew his hand from the clergyman's, and walked away towards his home at Hoggle End. Mr. Crawley also turned homewards, and as he made his way through the lanes, he repeated to himself Giles Hoggett's words. "It's dogged as does it. It's not thinking about it."

He did not say a word to his wife on that afternoon about Dr. Tempest; and she was so much taken up with his outward condition when he returned, as almost to have forgotten the letter. He allowed himself, but barely allowed himself, to be made dry, and then for the remainder of the day applied himself to learn the lesson which Hoggett had endeavoured to teach him. But the learning of it was not easy, and hardly became more easy when he had worked the problem out in his own mind, and discovered that the brickmaker's doggedness simply meant self-abnegation;—that a man should force himself to endure anything that might be sent upon him, not only without outward grumbling, but also without grumbling inwardly.

Early on the next morning, he told his wife that he was going into Silverbridge. "It is that letter,—the letter which I got yesterday that calls me," he said. And then he handed her the letter as to which he had refused to speak to her on the preceding day.

"But this speaks of your going next Monday, Josiah," said Mrs. Crawley.

"I find it to be more suitable that I should go to-day," said he. "Some duty I do owe in this matter, both to the bishop, and to Dr. Tempest, who, after a fashion, is, as regards my present business, the

bishop's representative. But I do not perceive that I owe it as a duty to either to obey implicitly their injunctions, and I will not submit myself to the cross-questionings of the man Thumble. As I am purposed at present I shall express my willingness to give up the parish."

"Give up the parish altogether?"

"Yes, altogether." As he spoke he clasped both his hands together, and having held them for a moment on high, allowed them to fall thus clasped before him. "I cannot give it up in part; I cannot abandon the duties and reserve the honorarium. Nor would I if I could."

"I did not mean that, Josiah. But pray think of it before you speak."

"I have thought of it, and I will think of it. Farewell, my dear." Then he came up to her and kissed her, and started on his journey on foot to Silverbridge.

It was about noon when he reached Silverbridge, and he was told that Doctor Tempest was at home. The servant asked him for a card. "I have no card," said Mr. Crawley, "but I will write my name for your behoof if your master's hospitality will allow me paper and pencil." The name was written, and as Crawley waited in the drawing-room he spent his time in hating Dr. Tempest because the door had been opened by a man-servant dressed in black. Had the man been in livery he would have hated Dr. Tempest all the same. And he would have hated him a little had the door been opened even by a smart maid.

"Your letter came to hand yesterday morning, Dr. Tempest," said Mr. Crawley, still standing, though the doctor had pointed to a chair for him after shaking hands with him; "and having given yesterday to the consideration of it, with what judgment I have been able to exercise, I have felt it to be incumbent upon me to wait upon you without further delay, as by doing so I may perhaps assist your views and save labour to those gentlemen who are joined with you in this commission of which you have spoken. To some of them it may possibly be troublesome that they should be brought together here on next Monday."

Dr. Tempest had been looking at him during this speech, and could see by his shoes and trowsers that he had walked from Hogglestock to Silverbridge. "Mr. Crawley, will you not sit down?" said he, and then he rang his bell. Mr. Crawley sat down, not on the chair indicated, but on one further removed and at the other side of the table. When the servant came,—the objectionable butler in black clothes that were so much smarter than Mr. Crawley's own,—his master's orders were communicated without any audible word, and the man returned with a decanter and wine-glasses.

"After your walk, Mr. Crawley," said Dr. Tempest, getting up from his seat to pour out the wine.

"None, I thank you."

"Pray let me persuade you. I know the length of the miles so well."

"I will take none, if you please, sir," said Mr. Crawley.

"Now, Mr. Crawley," said Dr. Tempest, "do let me speak to you as a friend. You have walked eight miles, and are going to talk to me on a subject which is of vital importance to yourself. I won't discuss it unless you'll take a glass of wine and a biscuit."

"Dr. Tempest!"

"I'm quite in earnest. I won't. If you do as I ask you, you shall talk to me till dinner-time, if you like it. There Now you may begin."

Mr. Crawley did eat the biscuit and did drink the wine, and as he did so, he acknowledged to himself that Dr. Tempest was right. He felt that the wine made him stronger to speak. "I hardly know why you have preferred to-day to next Monday," said Dr. Tempest; "but if anything can be done by your presence here to-day, your time shall not be thrown away."

"I have preferred to-day to Monday," said Crawley, "partly because I would sooner talk to one man than to five."

"There is something in that, certainly," said Dr. Tempest.

"And as I have made up my mind as to the course of action which it is my duty to take in the matter to which your letter of the 9th of this month refers, there can be no reason why I should postpone the declaration of my purpose. Dr. Tempest, I have determined to resign my preferment at Hogglestock, and shall write to-day to the Dean of Barchester, who is the patron, acquainting him of my purpose."

"You mean in the event—in the event——"

"I mean, sir, to do this without reference to any event that is future. The bishop, Dr. Tempest, when I shall have been proved to be a thief, shall have no trouble either in causing my suspension or my deprivation. The name and fame of a parish clergyman should be unstained. Mine have become foul with infamy. I will not wait to be deprived by any court, by any bishop, or by any commission. I will bow my head to that public opinion which has reached me, and I will deprive myself."

He had got up from his chair, and was standing as he pronounced the final sentence against himself. Dr. Tempest still remained seated in his chair, looking at him, and for a few moments there was silence. "You must not do that, Mr. Crawley," Dr. Tempest said at last.

"But I shall do it."

"Then the dean must not take your resignation. Speaking to you frankly, I tell you that there is no prevailing opinion as to the verdict which the jury may give."

"My decision has nothing to do with the jury's verdict. My decision——"

"Stop a moment, Mr. Crawley. It is possible that you might say that which should not be said."

"There is nothing to be said,—nothing which I could say, which I would not say at the town cross if it were possible. As to this money, I do not know whether I stole it or whether I did not."

"That is just what I have thought."

"It is so."

"Then you did not steal it. There can be no doubt about that."

"Thank you, Dr. Tempest. I thank you heartily for saying so much. But, sir, you are not the jury. Nor, if you were, could you whitewash me from the infamy which has been cast on me. Against the opinion expressed at the beginning of these proceedings by the bishop of the diocese,—or rather against that expressed by his wife,—I did venture to make a stand. Neither the opinion which came from the palace, nor the vehicle by which it was expressed, commanded my respect. Since that, others have spoken to whom I feel myself bound to yield;—yourself not the least among them, Dr. Tempest;—and to them I shall yield. You may tell the Bishop of Barchester that I shall at once resign the perpetual curacy of Hogglestock into the hands of the Dean of Barchester, by whom I was appointed."

"No, Mr. Crawley; I shall not do that. I cannot control you, but thinking you to be wrong, I shall not make that communication to the bishop."

"Then I shall do so myself."

"And your wife, Mr. Crawley, and your children?"

At that moment Mr. Crawley called to mind the advice of his friend Giles Hoggett. "It's dogged as does it." He certainly wanted something very strong to sustain him in his difficulty. He found that this reference to his wife and children required him to be dogged in a very marked manner. "I can only trust that the wind may be tempered to them," he said. "They will, indeed, be shorn lambs."

Dr. Tempest got up from his chair, and took a couple of turns about the room before he spoke again. "Man," he said, addressing Mr. Crawley with all his energy, "if you do this thing, you will then at least be very wicked. If the jury find a verdict in your

favour you are safe, and the chances are that the verdict will be in your favour."

"I care nothing now for the verdict," said Mr. Crawley.

"And you will turn your wife into the poorhouse for an idea!"

"It's dogged as does it," said Mr. Crawley to himself. "I have thought of that," he said aloud. "That my wife is dear to me, and that my children are dear, I will not deny. She was softly nurtured, Dr. Tempest, and came from a house in which want was never known. Since she has shared my board she has had some experience of that nature. That I should have brought her to all this is very terrible to me,—so terrible, that I often wonder how it is that I live. But, sir, you will agree with me, that my duty as a clergyman is above everything. I do not dare, even for their sake, to remain in the parish. Good morning, Dr. Tempest." Dr. Tempest, finding that he could not prevail with him, bade him adieu, feeling that any service to the Crawleys within his power might be best done by intercession with the bishop and with the dean.

Then Mr. Crawley walked back to Hogglestock, repeating to himself Giles Hoggett's words, "It's dogged as does it."

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